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600-01-02 Information Technology Management

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Information Technology Management

INFO 600

Spring 2010

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Course Description

An examination of systems and technology involved in the production of goods and the delivery of services. The predominant focus is on the manager's use of information and technology to influence the design, operation and control of systems in order to enhance competitive advantage. Topics covered include analysis of current information systems, identification and assessment of an organization's strategic use of information systems and trends of information technology development. This course explores foundational business processes and information systems; it is highly integrative and will draw heavily from other functional areas in business.

Because this course explores foundational business processes and information systems, it is highly integrative and will link closely to the other courses in the MBA program.

Texts and Course Materials

We have no text book for the course but will be required to order Harvard case studies from study.net (link to the exact web address provided in Blackboard). Other required readings will be linked from the course schedule. (link in Blackboard)

General Course Objectives.

1. To understand facts, concepts, and principles related to *managing* with technology.
2. To understand factors involved in attempts to apply technology to real-life situations.
3. To develop an awareness of the possible limitations of technology.
4. To focus on technology and how it relates to the strategy of a business.
5. To apply different IT concepts to the workplace.

Williams College of Business Mission

"We educate students of business, enabling them to improve organizations and society, consistent with the Jesuit tradition"

How this course relates to this mission

Technology has had a major impact on nearly every organization and on society at large. The course will critically examine these impacts via case analyses, readings on current topics, and in-depth discussions about the social issues of technology and the Internet.

Description of Graded Activities:

Participation 20%

Students will be assessed primarily on the quantity and quality of messages in discussion board topics. Quality messages will be those considered insightful, those that provide outside information, or that challenge opinions, that initiate new or related topics. Quantity of messages will include both the number of postings and the number of discussion board "hits" (how many postings you read).

Attendance at online meetings and participation during meetings is expected. Students are permitted to miss one meeting without penalty (students must view recording). Additional meetings missed will result in a 5% deduction in participation grade for each meeting missed.

Case Work

Students will select one case to present (with a group) and another case to serve as case analyst. Students will sign up for these via Discussion Boards in Blackboard.

Case Presentation 20%

Students will work in groups of 2 or 3 to make an online case presentation and analysis. The presentation will include a very brief summary of the case, identification of key issues, research on issues (insights from articles and web sites), recommendations, and (if possible) updated outcomes of the case or company profiled. Students should focus on providing insights and ideas into the case discussion rather than rehashing facts from the case. Students should also provide points of discussion and pose questions to participants in the online classroom. Approximately 30 minutes will be allotted for the case presentation and discussion.

The only deliverable will be the presentation itself. Students are not required to submit a paper as well.

Students will be graded based on instructor assessment, feedback from case analysts (see below), and peer evaluation from fellow group members.

Case Analysis 5%

Students will prepare a one page (single spaced) case analysis for one case. Student reports should include a brief summary of the case, identification of key issues, recommendations, and (if possible) updated outcomes of the case or company profiled. Case analysts will also be asked to complete a form based on their assessment of the case presentation group.

Note: Students will select one case to present (with a group) and another case to serve as case analyst. Students will sign up for these via Discussion Boards in Blackboard.

Information Technology (market) Research Study 20%

Students will work in groups of up to 3 members (or choose to work individually) on a research study related to technology. Depending on the nature of the study, length of the study may range from 5-8 single spaced pages (including tables, charts). A typical paper might have the following sections: Introduction, Background, Research Questions and Methodology, Findings (or Preliminary Findings), and Conclusions. Sample research questions might be (there are hundreds of potential relevant topics):

What impact does user feedback have on bid prices in Ebay auctions?

What role does gender play in responsiveness to email advertising?

What is the relative effectiveness of pop-up ads versus banner ads in user recall?

What factors do users versus IT departments view as most important in a corporate Intranet?

What is the correlation between fear of Identity Theft and dollars spent online?

To make such analyses, you will need to find relevant articles on your topic (preferably published articles as opposed to just web sites). You'll likely need a minimum of 5-7 references. You will also need to determine a research method for answering the question - a survey, interviews, or experiment are the most common choices. You should identify a research method that would provide the best data to answer the research question. In many cases, you will not have the resources or time to actually conduct the full study. If so, your paper will detail how the study should be conducted then your findings could be based on preliminary data or a pilot study (say, a group of 30 students who participate in your survey). More details about the paper will be provided later in the course.

Executive Interview: 15%

Interview a key manager regarding the strategic importance of IT in their organization. Solicit their opinions by asking them to strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements:

1. Information Technology is very important to the strategic success of our organization.
2. Our use of IT helps differentiate us from our competitors.
3. Most of our investments in IT have been successful.
4. We have implemented mechanisms that effectively measure and justify IT expenditures.
5. In examining new information systems, we typically seek to purchase solutions rather than develop them in-house.
6. We manage IT projects effectively.
7. We are looking increasingly at outsourcing many of our IT functions.
8. We are looking increasingly to reduce costs by using offshore IT outsourcing.
9. We are efficient in the collection, storage, and dissemination of data to support business operations.
10. We are able to use our technological resources to help decision makers gain strategic insights.
11. We are comfortable with the technical resources we have in place to manage security so that risks are minimized without overspending.
12. We have effective personnel measures in place (usage policies, employee education, etc) to minimize the risks of security breaches or compliance issues.

+ Any additional issues that you feel would be enlightening or omit questions you feel are not relevant to your organization.

The report should include a description of the interviewee (can be anonymous, but should identify the general responsibilities of the interviewee), detailed responses for each question (both scaled response and comments), and personal reflection and reaction to the interview. An announcement will be posted describing the grading criteria for the assignment.

Note: if you are unable to conduct such an interview (full time student, very small organization, etc.), you may request to have an alternative assignment on an examination of an IT Social Issue.

Exam 20%

An exam will be posted in Blackboard before the end of the course. A window of time will be given for students to take the exam. Students will log onto Blackboard and follow the link to the exam. Exams will be "open book" but they will also be timed (you may have only 2 hours to complete the exam), so students must be organized and prepared. Exams will primarily cover course readings (those that precede each case) and will cover general issues related to cases (no specific questions from individual cases).

Grading Scale

| Overall Avg. | Letter Grade |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 93-100% | A |
| 90-93% | A- |
| 87-89% | B+ |
| 83-87% | B |
| 80-83% | B- |
| 77-80% | C+ |
| 73-77% | C |
| 70-73% | C- |
| 60-70% | D |
| 59%&below | F |

Academic Integrity:

Cheating (using or attempting to use unauthorized materials in an academic exercise), fabrication (falsifying or inventing information), facilitating academic dishonesty (helping or attempting to help another commit an act of academic dishonesty), and plagiarism (representing the words or ideas of another as your own) will result in a grade of F for the course. If you have any doubt about whether you're plagiarizing, ASK. Xavier uses turnit.com to check papers for plagiarism.